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WOMEN IN EXTREME POVERTY

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WOMEN IN EXTREME POVERTY

Background

Traditionally the focus in poverty alleviation policies has been on the rural poor, but there has been a recent shift of focus in response to the increasing global urbanization, a feature that is especially striking in developing countries. The effects of the world-wide recession combined with an ever-increasing number of urban poor has produced a new phenomenon that demands that poverty be approached from a more general perspective. However there has until now been little emphasis on the issues relating to women in extreme poverty, although they represent a growing percentage of the population. More recently, as female-headed households have increased so has the realization that the needs of such women have not been addressed, and that traditional development approaches have done little to improve their lot. Therefore a new women-oriented geography has emerged, which will provide a new perspective on the situation of women, and in particular on the role that poor women play in the urban environment.

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The new approach: putting poverty from a gender perspective on the development agenda

Within the United Nations system, there is a new consensus on how to achieve the effective mobilization and integration of women into development. There is a growing realization that in order to alleviate poverty and to achieve sustainable development, it is necessary to move on from women in development (WID) to approaches that emphasize gender relations. While a WID approach seeks to make women visible and accepts the existing development framework, whether it is unsustainable or not, a gender-aware approach seeks to make gender relations visible in order to identify how to make the development process more equal and sustainable. A gender approach therefore challenges the existing development framework, with a view to creating a more sustainable development paradigm. These ideas have been discussed and further developed at the seminars on women in development and women in extreme poverty, which were organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women at Vienna in December 1992 and November 1993 respectively.

Women are major actors in the fight for survival. When men lose their paid employment, it is usually the women who draw on their endless personal resources to maintain an existence, however basic. The energy and resourcefulness with which many women find ways of surviving and of feeding their households is what keeps millions of poor people in the world alive, and yet these resources and capabilities have rarely been recognized as the foundation that enables other levels of the economy to function. Informal work, particularly that carried out by women, needs to be acknowledged as a significant part of the economy.

On the one hand, the picture is disturbing (population growth and an increasing proportion of poor) and time seems to be running out if the targets of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women 1/ are to be met before the deadline of 2000. On the other hand, it is encouraging that new thinking is being applied to an old problem, and that gender-related factors are now acknowledged as central to the obstacles hindering development and are now well established in all discussions and conferences, instead of being relegated to the category of women's problems.

After three decades of development assistance, there is now a shift in focus. There is a

realization that analysis at the national level and of the official statistics - the gross national products (GNP) or the gross domestic product (GDP) - is revealing only a part of the real picture. There is an increasing demand from all sides, but in particular from many non-governmental organizations who have been working in the front line of poverty, to recognize the informal sector, dominated often by the unseen work of women. At the grass roots, millions of women have always been working, feeding and supporting their families and supplementing their household income by tending small plots of land or by trading, but without ever appearing in official statistics. These women working in the informal sector have not only remained hidden by not being featured in the formal employment statistics, but they have also usually maintained this work without access to training or loans, but nevertheless providing a crucial support base for the rest of the economy. It is time to ensure not only that women have more access to formal employment, training and loans, but also that the informal work they do appears in the statistics.

At the grass-roots level (and the meaning is literal for the millions of women who are bent over all day tending their scarce crops), women who are experiencing hunger or who are combing through rubbish dumps in order to feed their families probably do not feel that great advances have been made, or that anyone at the national or international level cares about their struggle to survive, but awareness of the real needs of women and men living in this situation is increasing. It is encouraging that gender awareness is no longer a vague concept to be heard only in the environs of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women or at the Commission on the Status of Women; it now features throughout the United Nations system, is integrated into all development programmes and is finally being given the attention that it warrants.

Situations of extreme poverty are also receiving considerable global attention, and specifically the role of women in relation to poverty, yet the solutions remain somewhat elusive. The effects of extreme poverty have been clearly identified and present an alarming picture, especially to those who are lucky enough to live in affluent societies where situations of extreme physical poverty can no longer be witnessed on the doorstep. (Although there is increasing evidence of an erosion in social welfare in some highly industrialized countries and, with the increasing unemployment brought about by the economic recession, more people seem to be slipping through the social net and into real poverty.)

Despite the obvious results of poverty and the shock effect of seeing children eating out of rubbish bins, or picking through refuse dumps, the causes of poverty are complex, and vary from one culture to another. An analysis of the subject requires an understanding of many interrelated issues and therefore a coordinated approach from many disciplines is needed to see how the different factors interact with each other. The solution requires a real commitment from all the different levels of policy-making to effect some improvement urgently.

If the alarming projections for population growth - from 5.5 to 10 billion by 2050 - turn out to be accurate, unless there is a change in present trends, the number of persons living in poverty, currently estimated to be 1 billion, could rise to an alarming 2 or 3 billion. It is time for urgent measures and to heed such warnings as the one given by the Director of UNIFEM in her statement to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session:

> *"We are nurturing a time bomb. Reducing efforts to eliminate poverty is a short sighted exercise in denial. Indeed, the cumulative effect of international poverty, its fallout if you will, if unchecked, severely limits everyone's options for the future."*

Poverty cannot be isolated as a purely economic feature since its causes and effects are so diverse. Issues of human rights, of health and nutrition, of customs and traditions, of environmental influences, indeed all the political, legal, social, cultural and historical conditions that combine to create poverty must be considered. Without this wider understanding the solutions will not appear. It is therefore crucial to find the common threads linking these different contributing factors and a significant one of these is gender discrimination.

Nor can poverty be treated as yet another of those natural disasters that, in the developed world, television producers choose to splash on the screens at periodic intervals to jog the viewers' consciences and make them reach for their purses. Charity donations are a drop in the ocean and poverty is not a short-term natural disaster. When drought occurs and famine ensues, people start to die in large numbers and it is essential to provide money and supplies urgently to reach those people; however, it should also be realized that the drought was only the last straw. Many of these people live on the edge of hunger, in extreme poverty, all their lives. They are on a knife-edge, existing from day to day thanks mainly to the efforts of women who use all their energies to provide a fragile existence. This is a hard, but precarious world and, what people in some of the affluent countries in the North conveniently tend to forget, once the pictures are no longer being beamed into their sitting-room, is that there is a fine between the extreme poverty that represents the daily existence of millions of the world's population and disaster and death.

While it is necessary to recognize that this depressing situation is a reality for hundreds of millions of people, and that it has been a global problem for many years, it is also important to realize that there is new hope and that solutions are relatively simple. The past 20 years of research and analysis, with the focus on women, has led to an understanding of the underlying causes of poverty, and has pointed to the solutions. With international and national will committed to increasing the participation of the hidden masses in the process of sustainable development and sufficient funds to provide the necessary access to education; appropriate trading opportunities; loans on reasonable terms; clean water; decent housing; health facilities etc., poverty could finally be eradicated. The upbeat tone of the Human Development Report, 1993,2/ is a reminder that the cold war is over and that military spending is declining; therefore, it is time to use defence cuts to finance human development.

Making visible the invisible

The issues surrounding women living in developing countries in or on the edge of poverty - women who are usually working in the informal sector - are the focus of a book published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In her introduction, the editor, Joycelin Massiah, asks:

> *"Why are we, in 1989, still asking the same questions we asked in 1975 at the beginning of the UN Decade for Women? ... Women in development is now firmly entrenched on the agenda of international donor agencies. ... Yet, planning authorities are still reluctant to accept gender as a development planning issue." 3/*
> Joycelin Massiah

Chapter III of the book is entitled, "The survival strategies of poor families in Ghana and the role of women therein", by Vicky Okine, and provides a clear description, not only of the important role of women in the country's economy, through their leading role in the informal sector, but also how, without them, many households could not survive.

"The majority of them are small-holders producing on a very small scale and relatively unaffected by developments in the use of improved tools and seeds. Their involvement in agricultural production is often a struggle to provide enough just for their households. This does not encourage savings against future consumption, against economic shocks and other hazards. Yields are low and highly determined by the weather, yet women are denied necessary support by the state. Modern inputs, where available, are too expensive for them. The uncertainties in their environment make it too risky to try new methods of production. They are caught up in a typically 'no exit situation in which poor people, especially women, are trapped' [4]." 5/

The profile below describes the daily existence of just one urban-based woman living in Accra, but illustrates the problems common to many. Many such women are illiterate or semi-literate, and an increasing number have broken marriages leaving them as the heads of their households. In some households, all the women are engaged in trading in order to maintain a subsistence level.

"Madame Faustina, otherwise called Auntie Fausti is 35 years old and has had partial elementary school education. She lives with her second husband with whom she has one child. She had three children from her first marriage ... her husband lost his job and the whole family has since had to depend on her enterprise to survive.

"She learnt how to sew but could afford neither a sewing machine nor rent a place for sewing because she could not find the necessary capital to start.

"She initially started trading in plantain but had to stop because of financial difficulties. She now sells fish. It is not too profitable but at least she did not need much money to start; and at the end of the day she has money to buy food for her family.

"She is well known by the people from the village who supply her fish. She therefore buys on credit. She goes to buy the fish on Wednesdays and returns to Accra on Fridays to sell what she could procure. She, in turn, credits the fish to her customers. By the following Tuesday, all those who bought some of her fish will have paid. The cycle thus begins again with another journey to the fishing village. Auntie Fausti says she does not use any of the fish she sells because it is too expensive for her. They cost between 600 to 1,000 cedis each while she spends about 100 cedis on fish for her family.

"From her sales she is able to obtain an average weekly income of 3,000 cedis. This is what she and her household live on. Apart from selling fish she has no other job.

"Auntie Fausti does not have a stall and she does not want to be arrested and to have her fish seized. Accordingly, she goes around the market in the evenings - after 4.00 pm [when the police are not on duty] to sell her fish on credit. She has to be extra careful about the way she organizes the sales.

"She gets home quite late - sometimes after 8.00 pm. By this time, the elder child would have to take care of the younger ones.

"Her situation is typically desperate. She sums up as follows: 'All the money I make I have to struggle really hard for'. She nevertheless believes that one day she can make it. 'God's time is the best', she said." 6/

The significance of this example is not to illustrate extreme poverty. There are millions of women and men living in more extreme circumstances, with no possibilities for receiving regular income from trade, however it does serve to show the vulnerability of the poor and in particular of women and their daughters burdened with domestic duties and with no chance to improve their productivity. Mme. Faustina is surviving and sustaining her family, however this sustenance is fragile. There is no security and should her credit supplies be stopped, or the police choose to hinder her trading because of avoidance of trading tax, or should she fall ill, she and her family would be destitute. However, there is hope for improvement.

Although millions of people are living at this most basic subsistence level and working such long hours that there is no time left for anything but work, with appropriately designed programmes, they could easily be helped to reach another level. They are now in a survival trap and without specific projects that provide them with better trading opportunities, or with access to transport, or to cooperatives or credit to improve their service, they will remain on this most basic level of subsistence.

A couple of success stories described in Jeanne Vickers' book, Women and the World Economic Crisis, 7/ illustrate how effective low-cost, carefully designed interventions can be. They are summarized as follows:

> Chorker fish smokers developed in Ghana, and used now in other countries, can smoke 10 times more fish than traditional smokers using the same amount of firewood. Assuming that the female operators have access to markets for their increased productivity, the advantages are obvious, not only to the women but also to the environment
>
> The Kenyan Water for Health Organization working with the Ngusuria community built a safe-water system that eliminated the need for women to walk 14 kilometres, a task that could take up to seven hours daily. It also provided power for a maize mill and other improvements, which not only gave women time to attend courses in literacy, child and health care, but also saved them money.

Priority theme under the heading of development: women in extreme poverty

The Economic and Social Council established, by its resolution 1990/15, the priority themes for each session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be held during the period 1993-1996. The theme for the thirty-seventh session held at Vienna, in March 1993, under the heading "Development" was: "Women in extreme poverty: integration of women's concerns in national development planning". It was suggested by the recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, in which it was stated:

> *"10. An economic environment of growth with equitable distribution, both at the national level and in the international economic system, is essential, as is the recognition of women's full participation. The feminization of poverty reflects the underlying structural problems faced by women in the midst of economic change. Prevailing economic policies at the national and international levels have frequently failed to take into account potential negative effects on women or women's potential contribution and have accordingly not succeeded.*

"Recommendation VII. In order to help revitalize economic growth, international economic and social co-operation, together with sound economic policies, should be pursued. Structural adjustment and other economic reform measures should be designed and implemented so as to promote the full participation of women in the development process, while avoiding the negative economic and social effects. They should be accompanied by policies giving women equal access to credit, productive inputs, markets and decision-making and this should be incorporated fully into national economic policy and planning." (See Council resolution 1990/15, annex, sect. I.B.)

Seminar on women in extreme poverty

In preparation for the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women held a seminar at Vienna, from 9 to 12 November 1992, on the subject of the priority theme.

The ideas and actions that emerged from this seminar on women in extreme poverty represent a continuum, building on earlier meetings organized by the Division. Those meetings had already suggested that the issue of WID should have a new, more macro approach in its dimension.

The results of the seminar constituted the major input to the report of the Secretary-General for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session, which was very well received (see below for excerpts), and are also an important step in preparing the groundwork for discussion of the issue of development at the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace to be held in Beijing in 1995. This work must also be seen in the broader context of sustainable development and is highly relevant to the 1994 world survey on the role of women in development and the world summit for social development in 1995.

The seminar on women in extreme poverty had several objectives. The first was to examine the process by which poverty is generated and reproduced from a gender perspective. Particular emphasis was placed on the destabilizing effects of poverty, which brings with it changes in the reproductive and productive roles of men and women in the household. The focus was put on the intergenerational reproduction of poverty and its social costs. The second objective was to examine the role of different actors such as the State, the market and the community in a transformed development process for alleviating poverty. This examination should be based on a gender analysis, i.e. the systematic effort to document and understand the roles of men and women in key areas such as productive and reproductive activities, and access to and control over resources and benefits, including social, economic and environmental factors.

The overall objective was to make policy recommendations to the Commission on the Status of Women and other intergovernmental and governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations concerned with humanitarian assistance and development programmes. The issue of poverty needs to be given top priority by all, from community-based organizations, local, sub-national and national Governments, international agencies, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, special interest groups to bilateral and multilateral agencies. In particular, specific consideration should be given to poor women whose voices have had the least impact on policy makers.

The seminar brought together experts from different regions of the world to discuss the differences in the patterns of poverty and to try to identify the general patterns that all regions

share. This analysis of commonality has served to reinforce the global nature of the problem and to highlight the effects that poverty has on the advancement of women. Without solving poverty, other problems relating to the equality of access for women to development will also not be solved.

A list of participants who presented papers is given below.

Bola Akanji, Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, Ibadan, Nigeria: "A framework for the analysis female ultra-poverty and the integration of women in development: African perspective".

Patricia Alailima, Director, Human Resources Development Division, Ministry of Policy Planning and Implementation, Sri Lanka: "The integration of women in extreme poverty in development, the Sri Lanka experience".

Mayra Buvinic, International Centre for Research on Women, Washington, D.C., United States of America: "The costs and benefits of targeting poor woman-headed households and woman-maintained families in developing countries" (prepared with Geeta Rao Gupta).

María del Carmen Feijoo, Buenos Aires, Argentina: "Integration of women's concerns in national development planning: the Argentine experience".

Noleen Heyzer, Programme Coordinator, Women in Development, The Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: "Gender, economic growth and poverty".

Devaki Jain, Institute of Social Studies Trust, Bangalore, India: "Women in extreme poverty (WEP) and the global political economy - the intersections".

Molly Pollack, Consultant, c/o Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago, Chile: "Equitable integration of women in the labour market".

Júlia Szalai, Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary: "Some theoretical considerations on the prevailing concepts of poverty: the difficulties of international comparison".

Zenebeworke Tadesse, Deputy Executive Director, c/o Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar, Senegal: "Notes on the gender dimensions of poverty in Africa".

Taghrid Khuri Tubbeh, Amman, Jordan: "Women in extreme poverty".

The excerpts below are from the papers presented by the two consultants at the seminar, Diane Elson, Faculty of Economic and Social Studies, University of Manchester, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Naila Kabeer, Institute of Development Studies, University of Susex, United Kingdom.

"Public action, poverty and development: A gender aware analysis" by Diane Elson

"It is generally agreed that millions of people are living in poverty and that some kind of policy response is imperative. It is also agreed that women are disproportionately represented among the poor, a fact highlighted by two of the most influential and comprehensive recent publications on world poverty, the UNDP Human Development Report, 1990, and the World Bank World Development Report on Poverty, 1990.

"... poverty has a decided gender bias. A large proportion of poor households are headed by women, especially in rural Africa and the urban slums of Latin America. Female members of a poor household are often worse off than male members because of gender-based differences in the distribution of food and other entitlements within the family.' (UNDP, 1990, p. 22)

"'The weight of poverty falls most heavily on certain groups. Women in general are disadvantaged. In poor households they often shoulder more of the workload than men, are less educated, and have less access to remunerative activities.' (World Bank, 1990, p. 2).

"However, the strategies recommended for poverty alleviation are not based on analysis that systematically takes into account gender relations and the way they are biased against women. It is generally agreed that important contributions to reducing poverty can be made through the interacting operations of state agencies, markets, and community networks and organisations. But the potential for gender bias in these operations, and the need to remove such bias if women's poverty is to be effectively alleviated is not systematically addressed." 8/

Elson's aim is to provide a gender-aware analysis of some frameworks for poverty alleviation, advocating an approach that draws on the concept of public action, as put forward by Dreze and Sen in their book on hunger (1989). 9/

"... a key issue in effective responses to women's poverty is the ability of women's groups to intervene in the interacting operations of state agencies, markets and community networks and institutions, mobilising, pressurising, educating and organising to strengthen poor women's command over resources, beginning with command over their own persons and their own labour."8/

In her paper, Elson goes on to consider three influential approaches to policies on poverty: by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), paying particular attention to their recommendations about the role of markets, States and communities.

"...Three features of this World Bank World Development Report seem particularly worthy of comment. Firstly, it assumes that markets left to themselves are capable of generating, in the long run, sufficient remunerative employment opportunities to lift all the able-bodied out of poverty. It is based on a high degree of market optimism. Secondly, it assumes that people and their labour can be treated as detachable from one another. Labour, 'the poor's most abundant asset' (p. 3), is regarded as a separable asset like physical capital (machines); capable of being bought and sold and accumulated in the same way as machines. This is most explicit in the use of the concept of 'human capital' to refer to strength and skills. Just like machines, labour is valued for the income it can yield; and its contribution to people's well-being is via the commodities that this income can buy (or be embodied in). The 'productive use of labour' is not evaluated in terms of the ways in which people are enabled to develop and use their capacities, but only in terms of the output that this produces and the satisfaction (utility) this output gives to those who consume it. Thus the relation between a person and the work they do is depersonalized, and the labour is not treated as a human activity but as an alienable asset. Thirdly, the community is treated in a completely depoliticised way and local participation is conceived very much in managerial terms. The political process and 'considerations of political economy' are treated quite separately, as something that happens at the national level. The political process is presented in terms of a 'real politik' in which people are motivated in terms of immediate material interest, so that policies to benefit the poor are only acceptable to the non-poor if the non-poor benefit too." 10/

According to Elson, the Human Development Report of UNDP differs from the World Bank Report, because, first, while stressing the importance of markets, there is less optimism about the implications of deregulated markets; it talks in terms of using rather than freeing markets. However the Report of UNDP is notably silent on the question of market organization. Secondly, human capabilities are not treated as instruments detachable from human beings and thirdly, the political dimension is treated in terms of the relationship between the people and the Government, and not the relationship between the poor and the non-poor. However,

"A surprising omission is recognition of the role in human development of women's unpaid work of care for children, the old and sick, and, what is often forgotten, able-bodied adult males too. ... with no mention that a major input is women's unpaid domestic labour." 11/

Neglect of this role of women means that the Report of UNDP does not get to the roots of gender inequality in the way in which women are socially assigned the indispensable nurturing role in human development, and yet are not assigned control over the resources necessary to discharge this role.

"The mixture of markets, planning, and community self-help groups advocated by the UNDP Report does not get to the roots of women's poverty, because, despite the protestations about its human-centred values, it has a gender-blind and technocratic analysis of the way in which human capacities are themselves produced. The idea of a national plan for human development as a focus for action has much to commend it. But any worthwhile national plan for human development must take into account the demands made on the time of women to nurture others, and the resources made available to women to do this. The pressures on the time of poor women who have children are extreme, and relieving that time pressure should be one of the key objectives of policy." 15/

Similarly, Elson maintains:

"Dreze and Sen miss the opportunity to situate the specificity of women's poverty as fundamentally a matter of gender bias in entitlements. ... It is not simply lack of employment opportunities that constrains women to endure intra-household inequality; in many cases it is also the threat or actuality of violence or losing their children. Women's poverty is deeper than that of men because women are not able to exercise rights of ownership and use of resources, including labour, to the same degree as men. (Kabeer, 1991) [12]." 13/

The paper concludes with a set of guidelines for public action to strengthen the entitlements of poor women. Elson contends that, although there is considerable concern to target resources on women, and many schemes have already been introduced to promote economic opportunities for them, which have benefited poor women, the approach has been piecemeal and does not go to the heart of the matter. One specific suggestion from Elson, in response to the World Bank's concept of human capital, is:

"The kind of market opportunities that poor women should have a right to are those that recognise them as human beings with rights and capabilities and responsibilities. Even in the absence of overt discrimination, market opportunities which tend to reduce women to units of 'human capital'; which fail to recognise their domestic responsibilities; which do nothing to offset the weak bargaining position of poor women in 'co-operative conflicts'; such opportunities are inadequate, even exploitative." 14/

"Women in poverty: a review of concepts and findings" by Naila Kabeer

Kabeer also refers to the recent constructive initiatives by UNDP and the World Bank etc. and reiterates the need for a gender dimension, but says that there is a need for a sea change in policy formulation. The following excerpt is from her conclusion: policy strategies for women in poverty:

"Despite the complexities of collecting and interpreting data on women's poverty in the different contexts, the analysis of its causes is relatively simple. Women are poor because they are disadvantaged, in relation to their male family members, in the satisfaction of their basic needs and in their access to independent means for satisfying these needs. Strategies for addressing it are correspondingly relatively straightforward to formulate, but may be more politically difficult to implement if seen as explicitly favouring women. Here the possibility of using women's practical needs as a means of advancing their longer term strategic interests appears a more politically feasible solution. The twin-track strategy for poverty alleviation put forward by the World Bank in its 1990 report, basically consisting of labour intensive growth plus social services, contains certain promising implications for poor women provided it is given a gender-sensitive interpretation.

"First of all, it appears that time and energy constraints are particularly binding for poorer women because of their double involvement in making a living and building a family. At the same time, labour power is the single most important resource at the disposal of poor women - and men. Given both the long hours of work that poor women are already engaged in, and their greater tendency to engage in income-earning activities, they will benefit from labour-intensive growth provided efforts are made to address their disadvantages in the labour [market]. We have seen from India, a region with fairly rigid prescriptions about the gender division of labour, the extent to which poverty, on the one hand, and increased demand for labour on the other has helped to weaken and even erode gender-based restrictions among the landless, at least as far as making a living is concerned. The point is that poor women are most likely to respond to labour opportunities but if their prior domestic responsibilities are not addressed, this may be achieved only through further intensification of their workloads.

"The problem with past efforts to assist women in their familial roles was its 'welfarism', the provision of welfare goods such as health services, education and family planning to women as passive dependants of the state. It is necessary to move away from this confusion between welfare and welfarism. Given the emphasis in the new poverty agenda on the importance of the human capabilities of the poor, investments in social services need to be reenvisaged as critical investments in the human resource capacity of the nation and in the loosening of women's time constraint.

"However, provision of services does not guarantee their take-up. More carefully planned provision of social services targeted to poorer areas and classes are a first step in ensuring that women benefit from these services. A second step is to ensure that they are consulted in the planning of these services. Participation at all levels by potential users of scarce resources is likely to make the most cost-effective use of scarce resources by guarding against the provision of inappropriately designed services, embodying misplaced assumptions about women's needs.

"Similarly, making labour markets more accessible to women rather than creating women-only income generating projects would also not only have greater transformation potential for women's position within the family, but would again bypass the need for singling women out for women-specific interventions which have had a poor record in the past. It is in the longer-term interests of all women, but poor women in particular, that their needs and capabilities are incorporated into strategies for labour-intensive growth from their inception, rather than being incorporated as a footnote when it becomes clear that they are not benefiting from the new forms of growth. Key policy interventions here are the public provision of child care facilities or the provision of resources to women's community organisations to assist them in designing ways of meeting their child care needs.

"All of this requires a sea change in the formulation, design, planning and implementation of the new poverty agenda. Policymakers, including the authors of the World Bank new strategy, may have recognised that the 'efficiency' approach ... requires recognition of women's productive capacity. However poor women either continue to be subsumed within the categories of 'the poor' when broader policy issues are being discussed or else brought in as a special category requiring special interventions once the broader policy issues have been decided. Women in poverty have shown considerable resourcefulness and initiative in compensating for their exclusion from the resources of the market and the state. They have formed their own labour and credit associations, created community-based kitchens to release them from their domestic responsibilities, lobbied for social

infrastructure from their local authorities and resisted official attempts to encroach on their customary entitlements through ill informed projects and inequitable laws. Despite all their disadvantages, they contribute the major proportion of the income of poorer households and they ensure the wellbeing of their children in much of the world. The new poverty agenda needs to begin from a recognition of women's achievements, not their neediness, and it should aim at enhancing women's capabilities, not their dependence."

Excerpts from the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session*

The meaning and measurement of poverty

"It is important to clarify some of the different meanings given to the concept of poverty. A useful starting point for thinking about poverty is the concept of deprivation: the poor are those who are deprived of basic human needs. Like other important concepts of development, the notion of poverty contains a distinction between means and ends. It cannot be identified exclusively either with deprivation itself or with the lack of means to escape deprivation.

"The conventional economic approach has been to focus on the 'means' aspect of poverty. It has been entirely concerned with the sufficiency of household income in achieving a satisfactory level of welfare; how households choose to use their incomes is seen as a matter of individual choice rather than an issue of poverty. In order to define a 'satisfactory' level of welfare, it is necessary to make certain judgments relating to the constituents of both absolute and relative levels of poverty. Absolute levels refer to the deprivation of certain basic needs, which have to be met regardless of the social context. All needs related to human survival - food, water, shelter, fuel - may be seen as making up this minimum bundle of needs. A poverty line based on the level of income necessary to purchase this bundle of goods is an example of an absolute measure of poverty. Relative poverty, on the other hand, is defined by the general standard of living in a given context. It relates to the level of needs considered to constitute an acceptable standard of living in a particular society and is therefore likely to rise with an overall rise in the standard of living. ..."

Gender and entitlement systems

"[Entitlements] are concerned with command over labour, opportunities for the productive use of labour, returns on labour and control over these returns. As a general rule, women are less able than men to command the labour power necessary to activate or sustain independent forms of production. They have fewer options in the labour market because their prior responsibilities within the home make them less mobile and investments in the labour market tend to be lower. Returns on their labour are also lower - partly because of direct discrimination, partly because they have fewer marketable skills and partly because of imperfections in market forces, which confine them to less well paid and more casual segments of the

*E/CN.6/1993/3

labour market. Finally, women are more likely to be found in forms of labour processes where either their contribution is subsumed within an overall process that is controlled by men or else marketing of their produce and hence control over it passes to men. ... ."

"Thus, labour-based entitlement systems are unfair to women in a number of different ways. For example, women are at a disadvantage as a result of non-reciprocal labour arrangements with male household members, subsumption in male-controlled production processes, norms that restrict their access to paid labour, and a smaller cash income and hence the inability to hire labour.

"Negative synergy associated with female poverty lies in the combination of their dual responsibilities in family formation and family livelihood strategies. Having to earn a living and care for other family members simultaneously explains why time-allocation studies from much of the world show that women generally work longer hours than men when their unpaid domestic labour is taken into account.

"The official statistics on female participation in the labour force, however, only capture some dimensions of women's work and not the full range of tasks that they perform. The statistics usually indicate how much of this work is in economic activity as conventionally defined. ..."

"Throughout the world, gender differentials in returns on labour are considerable. Women's disadvantages within the labour market - poorer health and education, childbearing and child-rearing responsibilities, and a lower capacity to raise their wages through enhanced human capital - make it more difficult for them to move from one job or area to another.

"Along with women's disadvantaged entitlements within the household and labour markets, there is some evidence to suggest they have also been discriminated against in their entitlements to officially distributed resources. The assumption of male headship of unified household units has led to the distribution of irrigated land, agricultural extension advice and credit to male heads, with a disregard for the interests of women within households or of households headed by females."

Conclusions and recommendations

"The issue of poverty continues to be a major challenge for the international community, Governments and the people themselves. Its eradication is one of the three themes for the World Summit on Social Development to be held in 1995, a major objective of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 45/99, annex) and a significant component of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.*

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*The text of Agenda 21 is set out in volumes I-III of the report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26). The final version of the report will be issued as a United Nations sales publication.

"There is a growing awareness that poverty in general, and extreme poverty in particular, has a significant gender dimension. This gender dimension helps to explain why and how women and men experience poverty differently and unequally and become impoverished through processes that may differ. If differences between women and men are not taken into account, the causes of poverty cannot be adequately understood or dealt with by public action.

"Women are in a more disadvantaged position because of their dual need to make a living and to provide care for family members, tasks that are not equitably shared. Demands on time and energy are particularly constrictive for women living in poverty, as their labour is the single most important resource at their disposal. The neglect of human reproductive activities by society and especially the lack of a legitimate articulation between production and reproduction constitute the core of gender inequality, which affect women in general and women in poverty specifically. These circumstances are aggravated when, because of external economic factors or the absence of a spouse, the woman becomes the sole income-earner in the household. In addition, the availability of means at the household level to satisfy the needs of all its members is often based on entitlements that are not equitably available to men and women.

"Both women and men are subject to macro-economic factors relating to income earning and distribution. The gender dimension, at a micro-economic level, affects women and men differently. It also contributes to an intergenerational transmission of poverty.

"In the past, assistance to poor women vis-à-vis their family roles was primarily in the form of public goods such as health services, education and family planning. These services were often accompanied, however, by the attitude that women were passive dependants of the State, and they often embodied misplaced assumptions about women's real needs. In contrast, social services should be seen as investments in women's capacity to be a productive and equitably remunerated part of the economy and, to come to the core of the issue, they should be aimed at easing the constraints on women's time and the demands on their energy.

"To change the concept of public programmes implies examining the capacity of the State to deal with poverty and its central role, together with the market and the community, in bringing about economic and social change. It also implies a clear understanding of the relationship between the individual and the household when dealing with poverty. Programmes need to take into account the different needs and entitlements of different members of the household and the distribution of resources between them.

"Governments and the international community should promote change in the formulation, design, planning and implementation of a new poverty agenda, which should include the recognition of women as principal economic actors and enable them to realize their untapped potential. In order to meet the goals of equity and efficiency underlying current development thinking, significant changes are required in the way in which they are approached. These changes should represent a major challenge to society.

"Governments should promote social innovation that seeks to establish new institutions and new rules of behaviour, inter alia, by bringing hitherto accepted social norms and standards into line with reality. Policies that support a traditional division of labour based on gender should be questioned in view of their effects on fertility rates, female participation in the labour force and equality of men and women in the labour market.

"Policies and programmes should be adopted to empower women to become active agents in shaping the ongoing process, including a redefinition of the interrelationships between the social, economic and political factors that currently inhibit women's participation and life choices. A new perspective should be applied to the causes of inequality and men should be encouraged to examine the meaning of equality for their own life patterns and identity, including such factors as the emotional rewards to be derived from caring for their children. Society as a whole will benefit from an integrated policy strategy of this kind.

"Opportunities to enhance both economic efficiency and gender equity should take into account the multiple influences of the structural forces at play and the specific circumstances in each country. There is significant diversity amongst countries, in terms of both the economic integration of women (status of women) and industrial, labour market, social, political and cultural structures.

"The recommendations made at the seminar should be carefully studied and widely disseminated. They should be taken into account in the discussions on the preparation of the World Summit on Social Development, as well as in the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. They should also be taken into account by organizations of the United Nations system when they are designing and implementing operational programmes for the eradication of poverty."

Statement by Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session

"The Beijing Conference will be another milestone for women. The Conference will take place 50 years after the United Nations set its global objectives, one of which was to obtain the equal rights of men and women. It will also be an opportunity to see how far we have travelled toward achieving the objectives for the advancement of women 20 years after the Mexico City conference which launched the United Nations Decade for Women, and defined a first World Plan for Action to promote the equality of women and their contribution to development and peace. It will also be an opportunity to see how far, from a gender perspective, the United Nations has gone towards achieving the global goals of equality, development and peace.

"The reference point for the Conference in 1995 will be the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, which remain to date the most detailed expression of the international community's position on the advancement of women, intended to be implemented by the year 2000 ... it is also necessary to underscore the unprecedented changes that have occurred since 1985 and to recognize how they affect the situation of women and how they at the same time create opportunities for women's advancement ...

"In our preparatory work for the Beijing Conference, we must acknowledge the conceptual shift that has occurred over the past decade: the emphasis is no longer on women's issues, but rather on applying a gender perspective to global issues. Our focus should be to see how women are affected by global problems and how they themselves can bring about solutions to these problems. We can be proud that women have already mobilized around many of these issues and we can draw strength from what has been achieved and value the lessons learned. But if we are to move into the twenty-first century with confidence, we will have to maintain the momentum and continue our efforts at each of the other conferences which will take place between now and 1985.

"In the follow-up to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, it will mean ensuring that the gender dimensions that are found throughout Agenda 21 are kept in mind and the relevant provisions implemented.

"The International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 must clearly set out gender dimensions of population growth and movement.

"The World Summit on Social Development in 1995 must clearly define the policies that States, the market and the community should follow to alleviate poverty, achieve social integration and productive employment for women ...

"[The Fourth World Conference] should create the impetus in society for women to move forward, well equipped to meet the challenges and demands of the twenty-first century for scientific, technological, economic and political development ... .

"We must recall that there are only seven years remaining before the year 2000 and two of those will elapse as we prepare for Beijing."

Linking with other agendas and agencies: the mainstreamin of gender

Ms. Mongella talks of the conceptual shift of the last decade and the global nature of the problems. There is increasing evidence, judging by the agendas for the major United Nations conferences, of a concerted approach that integrates gender bias as it affects women and men, and of the acceptance of a new challenge. The section below focuses on some recent publications and statements that illustrate the conceptual shift in this collaborative approach.

The issue of women and poverty cannot be considered in isolation since it impinges on many other priorities, as illustrated by the provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission of the Status of Women. The rather complex title of the second priority theme under the same heading of "Development" highlights the interrelating socio-economic factors that affect women in urban areas and the need to share the expertise from various United Nations bodies: "Women in urban areas: population, nutrition and health factors for women in development, including migration, drug consumption and AIDS". The theme will have to synthesize the research findings and the experience from a variety of sectors and will further consolidate the

need to take a broader and more realistic view of the impediments to the advancement of women and the causes of poverty.

"... the essence of population increase will take place in urban areas over the next decades. The urban population in developing countries is expected to more than double between 1990 and 2020, representing an increase estimated at over 2 billion people. The magnitude of the phenomenon is illustrated by the fact that the total urban population in developing countries in 2020 will be as large as was the total world population, i.e. rural and urban, in developed and developing countries in 1965." (E/CN.6/1993/CRP.1)

This population aspect of WID has also been elaborated in a discussion note entitled "Gender perspective in family planning programmes", which was prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women for the Expert Group Meeting on Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being, held at Bangalore, India, 26-30 October 1992, and organized by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development in consultation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In the note, it is said:

"Economic development in tandem with distribution of resources and the political will to raise the status of women, are important factors for reducing fertility in the long run. Although this has been recognized in theory, it has only been translated into practice to a limited extent in family planning service delivery. Far too often programmes still operate in a 'gender-vacuum'; to a great extent ignoring the underlying factors which cause women to voluntarily or involuntarily give birth to many children, thus attempting to cure rather than prevent.

"... Due to their lower status, women often end up being more or less economically dependent on men all through their lives, whether on male relatives, husbands or partners. This leaves women with reduced bargaining power and little influence on decision-making. ...

"In order to be effective in the long run, family planning programmes should not only focus on attempting to reduce fertility within existing gender roles, but rather on changing gender roles in order to reduce fertility....

"A gender-sensitive approach to family planning could lead to considering integrating several new variables in these programmes. Limiting family planning programmes to the aspects of fertility is not enough, instead links between the status of women and, for example, education, salaried employment and migration will have to be identified and dealt with. By applying a gender perspective to each of the traditional variables, i.e. fertility, migration and mortality, one could gain new insights and find ways to improve policies and programmes."

UNFPA is another United Nations organization that is developing a new awareness of the need for a gender dimension. The interconnections between poverty, over-population and the inequality of women's status are considered in an article that appeared in the magazine of UNFPA. The article emphasizes the need to take into account different socio-economic and development perspectives and to include an analysis of gender discrimination in order to tackle the population problem.

"The short-sighted separation of demographic goals from other development efforts is a serious setback for the human rights of hundreds of millions of women who lack access to adequate nutrition, education, legal rights, income earning opportunities, and the

promise of increasing personal autonomy. The objective of reducing population growth is critical to reversing the deterioration of both human and environmental health. But development strategies that fail to address the root cause of the population problem will render this objective unreachable.

"From food production to control over income, indications are that the position of women within subsistence economies is growing increasingly insecure. Women have fewer and fewer resources within their control, and are having to make the trade-offs necessary to survive under increasingly demanding circumstances. To save time and energy, for example, they are forced to switch to less labour- or fuel-intensive crops or foods, although this often means less nutrition.

"The growing time constraints imposed on women by the longer hours they must work to make ends meet lowers their status and keeps birth rates high. When they can no longer add to their own labour burdens, women lean more heavily on the contributions of their children - especially girls. In fact, the increasing tendency to keep girls out of school to help with their mothers' work virtually ensures that another generation of females will grow up with lesser prospects than their brothers.

"... There are 5.5 billion people in the world today. Current estimates put the total at 10 billion by 2050, a near doubling in just over 50 years. Ninety-seven per cent of this population growth will take place in the poorest countries.

"... There is no doubt that more and better family planning programmes delivered in conjunction with broader reproductive health services, will vastly improve the health of women worldwide. They also may contribute to a more rapid reduction in birth rates by enabling women to exercise their human right to plan their families. But without dramatic changes in the theory and practice of 'development', these programmes cannot, and will not, reduce poverty or remedy the growing conflicts between human populations and the environment.

"One reason is that many of the problems attributed to population growth - such as deforestation and desertification - are less connected to population per se growth than to the government policies designed to protect vested interests, including those of the state itself. Another is that these same policies are heavily reliant on the 'shadow subsidies' of undervalued female labour and discounted natural resources to promote unsustainable economic growth, and further reinforce women's need for children.

"... The strategies needed to make women equal partners in society are complex and require a kind of sustained political commitment not abundantly present in many governments. The rapid pace of population growth, in contrast, ignites support for short-cuts such as family planning programmes based on narrow demographic objectives. Developing

world women, overwhelmingly poor and lacking political clout, too often become the first targets of population 'control'.

"... The inability of women to obtain land and other productive resources means they must marry and produce sons; their growing time constraints and family responsibilities reinforce their reliance on daughters.

"... No population policy alone can make up for the decades of economic and development strategies that ignored the needs of the poor, the limits of the environment and the over-consumption of the few. In assigning rights and duties, the emphasis is too often placed on the obligations of couples to have smaller families, and too rarely on the duties of governments to ensure that their people have the resources required to meet basic needs -despite the fact that poverty among women is the major cause of rapid population growth." 15/

The restrictions that poverty is imposing on progress towards equal rights for women was also recognized in discussion concerning another of the priority themes to be considered at the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women; namely, equal pay for work of equal value, including methodologies for measurement of pay inequities and work in the informal sector under the heading of "Equality".

"Comparable worth also promises a potentially fundamental transformation of women's lives by enhancing their capacity to support themselves and their dependents in a time of deepening female poverty." The importance of women's economic autonomy is not only because of the threat of poverty but also because it would allow women to make life choices more freely (e.g. education, work and marriage). Implicit is the recognition that independent support is the foundation for full citizenship and participation in the broader community.

"Although there has been some progress, social and economic changes such as world economic recession, the move to informal sectors and to part-time employment has renewed the problems." (E/CN.6/1993/CRP.1)

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and UNIFEM

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, also highlighted many of these interrelating issues, which will be followed up in the preparations for the forthcoming Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit on Social Development to be held in 1995.

As a result of the Rio Conference, the concept of sustainable development is now well-established; however, the Conference also provided an opportunity for the mainstreaming of women's concerns as an integral part of development if it is to be truly sustainable. In order to illustrate the connections with women's development, UNIFEM has co-sponsored a publication, the purpose of which is to serve as an easy reference to the recommendations in Agenda 21 that specifically mention women and their role in achieving sustainable development. For example:

"3.5 ... In general, design programmes should:

"(c) Contain a long-term strategy aimed at establishing the best possible conditions for sustainable local, regional and national development that would eliminate poverty and reduce the

inequalities between various population groups. It should assist the most disadvantaged groups - in particular women, children and youth within those groups - and refugees. The groups will include poor smallholders, pastoralists, artisans, fishing communities, landless people, indigenous communities and the urban informal sector.

"3.7 ... Governments, in cooperation with appropriate international and non-governmental organizations, should support a community-driven approach to sustainability, which would include, inter alia: (a) Empowering women through full participation in decision-making."

The publication goes on to highlight all the measures that need to be taken to encourage sustainable development while ensuring the advancement of women. The emphasis is on the need for an awareness of gender bias. The Conference emphasized that gender considerations should be integrated into all policies, programmes and activities.

UNDP

UNDP is also demonstrating a clear commitment to a gender approach to WID. It is collaborating with UNIFEM on developing a Regional Gender Strategy within its regional programme for Africa that will include "genderizing" some of Africa's regional training institutions.

"UNDP is focusing on developing and strengthening human and institutional capacities that enhance mainstreaming of women and women's issues. Areas of capacity building so far identified include: gender planning; disaggregation of statistics by gender; gender training as both a mainstreaming tool and as an empowering tool; participation; group formation and networking. In this aspect of our work we are particularly focusing on identification of new techniques and methodologies for women's development." 16/

The disaggregated statistics in the Human Development Report, 1993, 2/ provide interesting data on gender disparities. For example, Japan is top of the Human Development Index (HDI) overall, but when the HDI is adjusted to reflect the status of women, Japan falls to place 17; furthermore, Japanese women earn only 51 per cent of what Japanese men earn. The focus of the Report is on people's participation and it clearly points to the need for women's participation to be recognized and assured. Thirty-seven per cent of UNDP grants will go to poverty alleviation and people's participation programmes.

WHO

In response to the growing disparities between rich and poor and the trend towards the feminization of poverty, the World Health Organization has recognized the need to consider the broader aspects relating to health and specifically that of women. In a progress report by the Director-General on the women, health and development programme, 17/ women, as the primary providers of health care, are viewed in the wider context of their integration into development.

"The title of the programme denotes the complex interrelationships between the health of women and their social, political, cultural and economic situations as well as their contribution to health and overall development.

"Along with the sense of urgency brought about as a result of economic crises, population growth and environmental degradation, there has been the growing recognition that these and the other basic problems of development have a far better chance of being solved with greater involvement of women as active participants and agents of change. In the family, the health-enhancing activities of women relate to their many roles. Women are the health educators; women are the primary processors, storers and preparers of food and are responsible for nutrition."

Time for action

In April 1972, at its eighth session held over 20 years ago, the Committee for Development Planning focused attention on the problems of mass poverty and unemployment in developing countries. Its views were published in a document issued by the Centre for Economic and Social Information in which it is stated: the "problems of mass poverty are massive, growing and urgent. These problems require urgent attack". 18/ A similarly forceful line was taken in the statement the Director of UNIFEM made to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session: "as the world once again becomes distracted by the bombs that are exploding, scant attention is being paid to the bomb that is ticking away. The poverty bomb".

Already in 1972, the special needs of poor women had been clearly noted:

"It is generally overlooked that a large proportion of the persons occupied in low productivity service occupations are women, and many of them are widows and deserted women with children. Nearly all such women are illiterate and without vocational training. As industries in most developing countries recruit mainly male workers, these women are forced to support themselves and their families on work of such low productivity that malnutrition and high child mortality become a characteristic of such families. The solution to this type of acute poverty must be found in helping women to obtain higher incomes by opening the doors to industrial and other wage-earning jobs and by training them for more skilled work." 19/

and yet, these suggestions are still being heard today:

"Mass poverty continues to be a dominating feature in the developing countries, and unemployment has assumed serious proportions in many of them. ... Even if people have some semblance of work, their productivity remains low. The continued rural-to-urban migration of people in search of better work and incomes has further aggravated the problem by spreading slums and shanty towns and exacerbating the misery of poverty.

"... extreme and persisting cases of under-used human resources and glaring income inequalities are typically rooted in institutional rigidities ... it follows that programmes aimed at reducing mass poverty and unemployment should be conceived as essential components of the over-all process of economic and social planning. In some cases, this may call for substantial modification to present approaches to planning; in others, radically new approaches may be required ... It is difficult to suggest a general method of settling these differences, since the answer will depend largely on the political pattern and the prevailing social environment in individual countries ... Governments determined to combat poverty should find means of representing the interests of all major sections of their societies, particularly the economically most disadvantaged and politically weakest segments. ..."
(Sharon Capeling-Alakija, Director, UNIFEM)

Despite the continuing evidence of increasing global poverty, there are many encouraging examples of a changing picture. The gender approach is gaining acceptance and the whole United Nations system, together with many other affiliated organizations, is realizing its importance in achieving the goals for successful development, and in finally eradicating poverty.

Nevertheless, there is a long way to go and there are ever increasing numbers of refugees and people displaced from their homes, because of famine or civil unrest in their nations. The

clearly devastating effects of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic will only add to the number of people, and especially women and children, who are left without a livelihood and forced to migrate towards the urban conurbations in search of work.

It is important to heed the warnings of the past and the present and to ensure that the new policies do not remain only policies but are translated into action plans that involve the participation of women and men at all levels. If the United Nations reports and policies are not heeded and implemented at the national level and with urgency, the repercussions of poverty will threaten the stability of a large part of the world.

Tribute to Ms. Chafika Meslem

On 1 June 1993 the Division for the Advancement of Women said goodbye to Ms. Chafika Meslem, Director of the Division since 1981. Ms. Meslem left to take up her new post as Director of the Division for Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries in the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva. Ms. Meslem had led the United Nations programme for the advancement of women for twelve years, including during the Nairobi Conference, of which she was Deputy Secretary-General . During her period of leadership, the Division began its work to implement the Nairobi Strategies. Ms. Meslem has been a tireless defender of women's rights and has left her mark on the work of the organization.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report, 1993 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1993).

3/ Joyce Massiah, ed., Women in Developing Economies: Making Visible the Invisible (Providence, Rhode Island, Berg, 1993).

4/ Devaki Jain, "Address to the Round Table on Development on the Theme Survival Strategies of the Poor and Traditional Wisdom - A Reflection", Bangalore, May 1987.

5/ Massiah, op. cit., p. 182.

6/ Ibid., pp. 188-189.

7/ Jeanne Vickers, ed., Women and the World Economic Crisis (London, Zed Books, 1991).

8/ Diane Elson, "Public action, poverty and development: a gender aware analysis", paper prepared for a seminar on women in extreme poverty: integration of women's concerns into national development planning, Vienna, November 1992.

9/ J. Dreze and A. Sen, Hunger and Public Action (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989).

10/ Elson, op. cit., p. 4.

11/ Ibid., p. 14.

12/ N. Kabeer, "Gender dimensions of poverty: analysis from Bangladesh", Journal of Peasant Studies, vol. 18, No. 2.

13/ Elson, op. cit., p. 15.

14/ Ibid., p. 16.

15/ Jodi L. Jacobson, "Gender bias, poverty, and the population trap", Populi, vol. 19, No. 4 (October 1992).

16/ Statement presented by the United Nations Development Programme to the Commission on the Status of Women, thirty-seventh session, 17-26 March 1993.

17/ Women, health and development: progress report by the Director-General" (WHO/FHE/WHD/92.5), 1992.

18/ Attack on Mass Poverty and Unemployment: Views and Recommendations of the Committee for Development Planning (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.72.II.A.11), p. 8.

19/ Ibid., pp. 25-26.